

The Revival of JEWISH ART

Students of the Bible have been amazed at the wonderful artistic creations described in its pages. From the time when Bezalel built the tabernacle in the wilderness until the completion of Solomon's Temple was a period of art, which deserves a place in history along with the art of the Greeks.

The Jewish art period was earlier than the Grecian. The Jews did not spend much time in painting and work of the kind indulged in by the Greeks. They wrought in silver and gold and fine silks. Their artists worked with the most precious stones and metals, drawing threads of gold and weaving pure gold into curtains which endured until war ruined the wonderful fabrics.

No vessels were more artistically wrought than the vessels of gold and silver which were carried away to Babylon and there used in unholy carousals.

With the captivity, much of the artistic taste of the sons of Bezalel vanished. With the rise of Christianity and the scattering of the Jews the Hebrew became a mere toiler for his daily bread. Driven from city to city he became a merchant, dealing in valuables he could quickly conceal in case he was persecuted.

But a change has come in the life of the Jew. In Jerusalem near where Solomon's artists wrought the wonderful work in wood, ivory, metal, fabric and stones, a school has been established where the art of Bezalel again are being taught together with the learning of other artists of the civilized world.

Professor Boris Schatz, a Russian Jew, founder and principal of the school, is now touring America exhibiting some of the wonderful works of the artists of his school. All that the ancient Jew did, his students are doing. Besides they work with paint and brush, with crayon and pencil. They work with clay and bronze and marble.

Ten years ago Schatz was in the employ of the Bulgarian government. He was commissioned by the King of Bulgaria to come to America to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition as superintendent of the art exhibit from that nation. To the exhibits of the native Bulgarians Schatz added his own handiwork. Of the prizes won at the fair by Bulgarians, 90 per cent were works of art by Schatz. Bulgaria won the glory. That made Schatz think. He went to Jerusalem and there opened the Bezalel School of Handicrafts. He invited students from all over the world to come back to the Promised Land and again learn the art of their fathers and also the art of the Gentiles.

The results have been wonderful. The native Jews of Jerusalem are quick to learn art. Although they have been toilers for generations they now turn out pieces of art more wonderful than any of their kind for twenty centuries.

STUDENTS PAID WAGE WHILE STUDYING.

Schatz soon learned that many apt students were unable to continue their courses because of their poverty. They were forced to return to labor soon after entering school. Then he instituted the pay for students plan. Each beginner was paid as much as he could earn at common labor. When he became more proficient in art his wage was increased by a board chosen by the students themselves. Their work was sold to defray the expenses of the school.

It was while a boy in Russia that Schatz received his first inspiration to become an artist and rejuvenate the lost art of his ancestors. A "maggid" from Jerusalem came to the Jews. Schatz went to the meeting place with his father and heard descriptions of the land of Israel. After the address he went with his father to the Russian Inn to see pictures of Jerusalem.

Speaking of what he saw, Schatz said:

"I still remember the pain that seized my child-heart when I saw a little carved box upon which was a sort of potato shaped figure with the inscription, 'Tomb of Our Mother Rachel.' There was also the picture of a wall with four brooms standing behind it and designated the 'Wailing Wall' and I regarded this as a profanation of our sanctuary, and I swore within my heart that as soon as I should be grown up and become a good artist, I would betake myself to Jerusalem and draw the sacred places so beautifully, that all the Jews would have a delight therein.

"Many years passed. I grew up and learned how to paint and make sculptures, but I did not journey to Jerusalem, nor paint the tomb of our Mother Rachel, nor the Wailing Wall, nor give any delight to my fellow-Jews. Strangers, non-Jews, taught me art and gave me their ideal; and for this I worked and wrought all manner of beautiful things. I looked upon art as a temple and upon artists as its priests. I dreamed that I should become a high priest in the service of sacred art, that I would teach mankind the ideal of the great and beautiful, to love the good and to hate the evil.

"But again the years rolled by and brought disappointments. I saw how the sanctity of art is dragged down a pedestal and all the

prices of art how low before it. I felt cold and ill at ease in my world of artists. I lost my God, and with a soul rent in twain and a vacant heart I turned my back upon the magnificence of Paris.

DECIDES TO OPEN JERUSALEM SCHOOL.

"When I decided to open a school for Jews in Jerusalem. To bring about its fulfillment I traveled through many lands. I studied everything bearing upon the subject, and when I thought myself sufficiently endowed with ability, and felt within me the strength to give up everything in order to devote myself wholly to the sacred cause, I went to Theodor Herzl. I approached the man who had the courage to tell the whole world openly what he felt, and who had the power to attempt to realize his ideas. I spoke to him of my ideals with glowing enthusiasm for a full hour. He wanted to be informed about every detail. His handsome presence inspired me. Upon his majestic brow there were deep thoughts to read, and in his sorrowful eyes the noble Jewish soul, the soul which gazes upon a fantastic world and yet beholds the bitter reality of today. And after I had finished speaking and wondered with beating heart: What answer will he give me?

"Good, we shall do that," he said, quietly and resolutely, and after a brief pause he asked: 'What name will you give to your school?'

"Bezalel," I answered, 'after the name of the first Jewish artist who once built us a temple in the wilderness.'

Boris Schatz is frankly a dreamer.



er. His first impulse was to establish a school to revive Jewish art. Being an artist, he could think of nothing but art as the means for uplifting his people. But the many bitter experiences taught him by real life when he went in search of support of his plan entirely changed his views. As he says in a recent article:

"There is no lack of art, but there is a lack of bread and freedom. The unfettered mind of man has invented clever machines and the machines and factories have turned man into an unthinking slave. The machine has estranged him from the beautiful world of nature. It demands from the laborer neither thought nor understanding, but his flesh and blood. It has even robbed him of his last consolation, the pleasure of creation, for in the factory he never creates a complete article, and often does not see how

it looks when finished. He has only one task—to hurry after the machine with maddening speed, to drive it onward, and to be always on guard that it does not tear his fingers away. The factory poisons the workman with its foul air, it petrifies his soul by its cold precision, it shortens his days by its cruel haste. The healthy type of workman of a former age, who thought over his work with love and with care, who gave to mankind objects of art, is now no more. Hence in modern manufacture there is no individual taste, because the workman has been robbed of it. The iron devil hammers away and whizzes with maddening speed, and the workman who flits around it like one confused is animated by only one thought—when he will hear the factory whistle give the signal that he may hasten away

as quickly as possible from this inferno and its ministering demons."

So, instead of an art school, Professor Schatz set about founding a trade school where men and women, boys and girls, may be properly equipped to earn a living. With a capital of only \$1,500 and a great fund of ideals and enthusiasm, Professor Schatz opened Bezalel School in one small room on one of the by-ways of Jerusalem.

Now the school has 500 students and last year the profits from it were more than \$75,000.

Prof. Boris Schatz Brings Back Learning of Men Who Made Tabernacle and Temple, Teaching Men From Sixteen Nations at Jerusalem



AT top—Professor Boris Schatz. Upper right—The Bezalel School. Center right—The matrimonial agent by Schatz. Below—A metal jewel box and a vase of hammered brass, by Bezalel students. Center left—The crown of a parchment scroll, made of gold, by Bezalel students.

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SULTAN'S ARTIST TEACHES CARPET MAKING.

Teachers were brought there from all over the world. One of these teachers was the carpet weaver for Abdul Hamid. When Abdul was driven from his palace the weaver was given employment by Schatz. He taught the students how to

weave the wonderful silk carpets. It was an art known to himself alone. When he was recalled to Constantinople after a year one of the students who had learned the art took his place.

These wonderful rugs are dyed with vegetable dyes. Some of them are so complex that it takes an artist a year to weave them. Among the patrons of the school is the Queen of Holland, who has purchased one of these rugs. Another patron is Nathan Strauss of New York, who has purchased costly rugs and curios. Among the curios are scroll holders for unwinding and rewinding parchment. These scrolls are still in use in Palestine.

Many of the people of Jerusalem are so poor that they own few books. Among the pupils who came to Schatz to learn was a boy who knew only how to read upside down. Professor Schatz thought something was the matter with his vision, but upon investigation learned that in the family was only one book. All read from it at the same time and all could not read from the right side, so this boy had learned to read upside down.

One of the wonderful pieces of bronze work by Schatz is the

are studied carefully so as to be well mastered.

The activities in operation at Bezalel are varied. There are classes in carpet weaving, tapestry, filigree work, copper work, wood turning, basket and osier work, lace embroidery, besides advanced classes in drawing, painting and sculpture. In addition to the technical teachers, the staff includes instructors in Hebrew, singing, etc. There are advanced classes in general subjects and the workmen have formed a band, choir, theatrical and literary societies. The school has a small theater where plays are given. There is a museum with some real treasures of artistic and also archaeological value, besides a natural history section, where everything that is native Palestinian is to be found.

The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company have constructed nearly a thousand miles of main and branch lines during the last twelve months. This would not have been possible had not track-laying machines been brought into requisition. One of these track-layers has put down five and a half miles of steel in a single day.

GREAT GLACIERS OF SAND MOVE ACROSS PLAINS, INUNDATING VEGETATION AND SHRUBBERY

Sand "glaciers" of the type that have taken possession of several hundred acres of fertile farm land near Hutchinson, Kan., are subjects of immense interest to geologists, according to Prof. Thomas C. Chamberlin, head of the department of geology at the University of Chicago. They are especially interesting in that they are rarely encountered.

The Kansas phenomenon consists of a moving mountain of sand. It was part of a range of sand hills and for years it kept its place, having with as much steadfast dignity as is common to sand hills. A year ago, however, it began to move. It continued to move month by month, until recently, when it was stopped by the channel of the Little Arkansas River, into which it had thrust itself. Residents of the country for miles around were puzzled by what seemed to them an

inexplicable freak of nature.

"The movement of the sand hill is not at all a mystery," said Prof. Chamberlin. "Occurrences of the kind, though not frequent, have been observed often enough, so that geologists understand pretty well their nature and cause."

"Sand glaciers," as such a mass is commonly called, is a misnomer," continued the professor. "While the slide has some characteristics of glaciers, it is much more properly related to landslides."

"The causes are not difficult to trace. A river eating away under its bank may be responsible for a small one. In this case, however, where the movement is on a larger scale, the cause is slightly different. A very wet season or a series of wet seasons soaked through the sand until water reached the clay subsoil. This became slippery and on it the great body of sand began to slip. This is the usual way in which the slides develop."

"Progress of the slide varies in speed according to the slope of the

clay on which the sand rests and according to the weight of the body which is set in motion. It may be very slow, as in this Kansas case, and unattended by danger to those who reside in the vicinity; or, once under way, the motion may be accelerated to such a rate that it is known as an avalanche. The sand glacier of Kansas and the avalanches of the Alps and of the Rocky Mountains are one and the same thing except in the rate of their motion."

"The Culebra slides, which have been such a problem to Panama Canal engineers, are a perfect illustration, on a big scale, of the type to which the Kansas phenomenon belongs. Here an immense body of sand, rock and soft earth, which has been at rest, had its equilibrium upset by the excavations for the canal. With a part of its support gone the whole body has been tumbling down, from time to time, into the ditch, and it will so continue to fall until an equilibrium has again been reached."

"In the same manner the Kansas sand hill has moved, though more slowly, month after month, meeting no obstruction of size sufficient to halt it, until it struck the river bed. There it has been stopped and there it will be halted permanently, for it is not likely that hills there are large enough to fill and surmount the channel of a good sized river."

"There are no practicable means of arresting by human effort the movement of a whole hillside like this. With smaller slides a successful effort can be made to stop their progress, or at least guide them into paths where they will do a minimum of damage. In mining regions the first signs of a slide above the workings are met by the erection of a wall or stockade. In the case of a small bed of loose earth this will effectually halt the movement for good, or where the mass is too great to be stopped it will be shunted off to one side, away from the mine."

"Small slides, too, may sometimes be checked by means similar

to those used along the Baltic coasts to prevent the depredations of sand dunes. (Dunes are unrelated to these Kansas sand hills.) Here stockades are constructed in squares, within which trees are planted. These trees take root and anchor the loose earth above to the firm subsoil.

"None of these means could have been used for the Kansas trouble, however. That was a movement of too great size to be checked. Moreover, as I have said, the progress of that slide is probably at an end now that the bed of the river has been reached."

An article by James Taft Hatfield in which he describes the immense sand dunes of Germany and their shifting nature, is recalled.

Professor Hatfield told of his journey from the northeastern tip of Germany, after crossing the Russian frontier, along the coast of the Baltic sea, through a country the formation of which he described as a "long, narrow barrier (nehrung) for

shifting dunes of sand, facing the sea and inclosing an extended basin of shallow water or 'haff.' And again, speaking of the dunes at other points, the professor told of their appalling activity beyond Schwarzwort. There they are the highest in Europe, nearly 250 feet, he asserted, 'bleak and naked,' and advancing from west to east, relentlessly pushing the coast farther into the sea or making little islands of sand in the water."

Because of the dunes, Professor Hatfield explained, the villages of the vicinity live in the shadow of calamity and in the knowledge that within recent times many villages have been swept away by the onward progress of the all-enveloping sand. Professor Hatfield praised the work of the German government in arresting the "blowing of sand" by an ingenious method, involving the planting of pine trees, each in a lump of clay, in small squares or divisions, staked off with pickets along the length of these wandering mountains of sand.

